



African Cotton & Textile Industries Federation (ACTIF)

Grant Quarterly Progress Report

Program Name: To expand market access to promote trade in African cotton, textiles and apparel

Standard Grant Agreement Number: ACT-STA-009-001

Program Dates: 1st December 2009- 31st March 2010

Date Grant Completed: 31st March, 2010

Beneficiary's Name: African Cotton & Textile Industries Federation (ACTIF)

Program Amount: USD \$754,472

Person Reporting: Rajeev Arora
Executive Director

Date of Report: 15th April 2010

1. Program Background

The African Cotton & Textile Industries Federation (ACTIF) was formed to promote trade and increase market access for the cotton, textile and apparel industry in Africa. This Mission is informed by its Vision which is, “an integrated cotton textile and apparel industry that effectively competes on the world market.”

The goal of ACTIF is increased trade in African cotton, textiles and apparel. This goal will be realized through the attainment of the organization’s strategic objectives which are:

- i. To promote trade in African cotton, textiles and apparel;
- ii. To expand market access;
- iii. To establish a market information system;
- iv. To promote the development of policies that are supportive to trade;
- v. To provide an institutional framework for the development of the cotton, textile and apparel industry in Africa; and
- vi. To enhance private sector involvement in regional policy formulation and implementation.


2. Objectives of the Grant

The following were the objectives of the project activities under this Grant:

1. To strengthen ACTIF institutional capacity to carry out its mission and provide services to members
2. To be the catalyst for effective public/private partnerships, promotion of regional dialogue, consensus building, increased communication and creating an enabling environment for the growth of the cotton, textile and apparel industries that will positively impact on trade and development.
3. Promote the regional value chain approach to the development of intra-regional trade, create market linkages, exploit the opportunities afforded by existing trade agreements, develop effective use of market and economic data, and create an interactive trading platform to enhance trade in both regional and global markets.
4. To assume a regional leadership role in regional and global trade policy deliberation, help establish an enabling policy environment that will exploit the latent potential in intra-regional trade, build the capacity of the private sector in policy formulation, increase its ability to negotiate and seek trade advantages, and to develop unified regional positions.

3. Benchmark Assessments and Levels of Achievements - (a synopsis)

(See 4.0 below, the principal Grant Activity Results in more detail)

Activity/Tasks	Targets	Level of Achievement
1. Staff training /team building	Feb 15-16	<p>The two day event was a worthwhile venture for the ACTIF staff as they returned to the office full of renewed energy and enthusiasm. There has been improved coordination and communication that has enhanced commitment to team work to offer better service delivery to ACTIF members.</p>
<p>2. National level meeting – Mozambique</p>  <p>Stakeholders at the inaugural meeting</p>	<p>28th Jan, 2010</p>	<p>This was the first time ACTIF was engaged directly with the Mozambican CtC value chain stakeholders. The organization of the meeting was done in collaboration with the Mozambique Ginners Association (AAM). It was a very successful round table that has strengthened the collaboration and coordination with stakeholders in Mozambique to boost the ACTIF's promotion of the regional supply chain. The meeting was attended by both public and private sector players in the country.</p> <p>The ACTIF team held a meeting with the Mozambique Cotton Institute on the sidelines of the meeting; during the meeting the director of the institute welcomed the ACTIF's Pan-African initiative. He stated that he would like ACTIF to assist the Institute organize a CtC investor conference through its contacts. The Ministry of Industry also requested ACTIF to provide input to the Textile sector strategy preparation.</p> <p>This was one of those rare Stakeholder meetings that the few textile and apparel companies in the country had an opportunity to meet with their well organized counterparts in the cotton sector</p>

		<p>thus improving collaborations between them to bolster their position in lobbying the government for better business environment.</p> <p>The meeting achieved one of the goals set for the national level meeting which is; to build cooperation, interaction, and linkages within the region. This meeting was also attended by a representative of the USIAD COMPETE program thus building collaboration to boost the regional value chain</p>
<p>3. National Level Meeting – Nigeria</p>  <p><i>Some of the participants at the Nigerian meeting</i></p>	24 th Feb 2010	<p>The meeting was a follow up on the one done by the Program member last quarter. It was organised in collaboration with the cotton, textile and Clothing stakeholders in Nigeria, to discuss how to engage with the stakeholders in developing synergies to take advantage of trade opportunities within and outside the region. In-attendance was 15 private and 16 public sector stakeholders.</p> <p>The main milestone of the meeting was the enthusiasm exhibited by the Industry; the Nigerian Textile Manufacturers Association & Nigerian Textile Garment & Tailoring Employers Association, and the National Cotton Association of Nigeria decided to join ACTIF membership after the meeting. Key program priority areas they would like to do jointly with ACTIF are; AGOA sensitization workshop and institutional capacity building workshop. The meeting was covered in the local media thus enhancing ACTIF visibility to promote the regional integration and brand Africa theme- <i>“Origin Africa -from Farm to Fashion”</i></p>

4. National level Meeting-Egypt	16 th March 2010	<p>Egypt is one of the major players in the Intra-COMESA countries trade. The Egyptian textile industry accounts for 3% of the GDP, 27% of industrial output and about 14% of non petroleum exports. Careful supervision by the government has enabled the sector to rank second in production after agro industry and first in terms of jobs in the country (30% of the labor force). The strengths of the industry lie in three main areas: Raw materials that are locally available including natural fibres (extra long staple cotton) and manmade fibres (acrylic); Low prices</p> <p>of utilities such as energy and water costs; Human resources with low labor costs and highly trained personnel. Another advantage of the Egyptian sector is its larger population of about 83 Million people. Egypt is also strategically located with an average of 4 hour flight time to most European capitals; its close proximity to North America as compared to the Asian countries; availability of direct vessels to USA east coast; proximity to gulf Asia and Africa. The conducive environment in Egypt has led to massive investment in the industry and currently some major International brands are manufactured there including: GAP, LEVIS, MARKS and SPENCER, Liz Claiborne, TOMMY HILFIGER, POLO RALPH LAUREN, GUESS, C&A, NEXT and HUGO BOSS.`</p>
5. National Level Meeting –Swaziland	29 th March 2010 Manzini Swaziland	This meeting was the first ever Cotton to clothing value chain meeting in Swaziland thus it attracted the attention of all key stakeholders that included the Government, Technoserve , private sector

		<p>value chain stakeholders and the USA Ambassador to Swaziland.</p> <p>During the meeting ACTIF team noted that the Swaziland textile and apparel sector has survived the effects of the Global economic crunch better than most of the Sub-Saharan Africa due to the supportive policies of the government.</p> <p>There are no private sector National Association but as a result of the meeting the textile and apparel stakeholders are looking at ways to revive the collapsed trade Association.</p> <p>The main outcome of the was the agreement of by the private sector National Value chain stakeholders to revive the National trade body to take care of the industry trade and policy advocacy interest. The ACTIF team also got the vital Swaziland market information that will be useful in promoting intra-regional and international trade. For example of the Apparel manufacturers in Swaziland have private label that is sold in the regional and local market, this is a good initiative that can be emulated by other Sub-Saharan African Countries</p>
6. ACTIF Launch –	April 2010	<p>As part of the upcoming ACTIF'S AGM , Launch and Fashion show in April 2010,ACTIF organized a series of preparatory activities that included the flowing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement of an event and PR consultant • Preparatory work on the event stationery • Development and publishing of ACTIF brand manual, Company profile , Monthly Newsletters , Banner and other branded company materials

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media and PR strategy- the first of a series of event in this category was the successful hosting of the media Luncheon. The aim was to introduce ACTIF and the regional CtC to the Kenyan media, highlight member services and upcoming activities <p>ACTIF achieved positive media coverage in 5 major local and regional electronic and print I media. As a result of this ACTIF has several follow up interviews request that we hope will build the momentum , the ACTIF story was covered in the East African, Capital FM,</p>
7. Complete the process of revamping, merging and rationalizing the cottonafrica.com and actifafrica.com websites; to provide a platform to enhance inter-regional trade and supply chains in cotton/textiles	By 20 th April 2010	This work is at its final stage and it's expected to be completed by 31 th March 2010 in readiness for the ACTIF Launch
8. Commence COMESA Industry strategy implementation	Ongoing	The strategy implementation committee scheduled to take place by June 2010, organized in collaboration with COMESA and ITC. This is aimed at synchronizing all the implementation activities that are being carried out by other donors.
9. In collaboration with COMPETE program conduct a study in selected countries to provide information on production capacity and market information	Ongoing	This work has been commissioned and the first draft is expected in April 2010, the information will provide the vital data and facts needed to design various interventions activities in the short and long term.
10. In collaboration with USAID-COMPETE carry out a competitiveness survey	April 2010	This survey is first step to develop the baseline competitiveness index that will be used to measure progress in tackling competitiveness

4. Grant Activity Results

a) Staff training(Team Building)

Introduction

According to Dr. Gregatti and Dr. Sirois from the Oxford university of Belarus, teamwork may be defined as the capability to comprehend and recognize the diverse strengths and abilities in a group setting and then applying them to one final solution. The ACTIF secretariat took two days out of their normal schedule to participate in team building activities at the Lukenya getaway located in the outskirts of Nairobi facilitated by Blue Sky Adventures LTD.

The natural, bushy and quiet environment that was a distant comparison to the normal hustles and bustles of city life. Located at the foot of Lukenya hills with large grounds, nestled in the rich, cultured Athi plains region, it provided the perfect environment for the team to unwind and explore some outdoor activities aimed at enhancing team work. The two day workshop was very productive as the team was taken through various activities the key lessons learnt are highlighted below:

Leadership; Different activities were used to demonstrate leadership qualities in the team members. One that stood out involved an exercise of issuing and following instructions along the organizational structure. The exercise was quite a challenge for all the members but it managed to highlight the importance of good leadership skills, importance of understanding instructions and finally the importance of following instructions. Each member had to play their roles effectively for success to be achieved.

Effective Communication; Effective communication is a key factor for any organization to accomplish its mandate. During one of the discussion sessions, the members agreed that there was a need to constantly improve on communication with each other to enhance work efficiency and effectiveness within the organization.

Change Management; As Isaac Asimov once stated, the only constant is change, continuing change, inevitable change. Dealing with change is a challenge that can be compared to chasing a moving target. This is owing to the fact change always comes with new challenges. Every organization has to continuously deal with change and it was well fitting that the team building sessions included activities for change management. The members learnt that inability to adapt to new environment posed a great challenge to individual members and could easily impact on the entire organization.

Teamwork; This single activity offered a combination of tests all geared towards working as a team. This include: trust, hard work, encouragement, motivation and courage

The two day event session was a worthwhile venture for the ACTIF staff as they returned to the office full of renewed energies. There has been improved coordination and communication that has enhanced commitment to team work to enhance service delivery to ACTIF members.

b) National level stakeholders meetings

Introduction

The African Cotton and Textile Industries Federation (ACTIF) goals are to;

- Build cooperation, interaction, and linkages within the region
- Promote inter-regional trade; addresses key policy issues and post MFA challenges
- Create a unified and recognized voice in both regional and global trade affairs that provide effective regional representation at international fora

To successfully achieve the above goals, ACTIF planned a series of National level meetings across the region to better understand its constituents to promote regional integration through trade and investments. The aim of the meetings was for the ACTIF secretariat and the National Cotton to clothing Value chain stakeholders to come together to share /discuss experiences to develop synergies in program /activities and build a strong base for co-operation and collaboration to enhance trade in Cotton to Clothing value chain and regional integration. The objectives were;

- To understand issues that affects the industry at the National level, to discuss possible areas of ACTIF National level intervention activities and prioritized them for action in the year 2010/2011 work plans
- To promote ACTIF members services and establish formal engagement with the National Associations Board members.
- To create opportunity for ACTIF members and potential members to engaged the ACTIF secretariat to develop synergies to enhance the promotion of regional Cotton to clothing Value at the grassroots
- To promote public private sector partnership at National and regional level to enhance regional and national trade policy advocacy to create enabling environment for investment and trade

Several meetings we planned in the following countries, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Egypt and Swaziland. The Zimbabwean meeting was cancelled due to the prevailing sanction that restricts the use of USAID funds in the country while the South Africa one was re-scheduled to a later date by the stakeholders. So far very successful meeting have been held in Mozambique and Nigeria

Mozambique on 28th Jan, 2010

This was the first time ACTIF was engaged directly with the Mozambican CtC value chain stakeholders. The organization of the meeting was done in collaboration with the Mozambique Ginners Association (AAM). It was a very successful round table that has strengthened the collaboration and coordination with stakeholders in Mozambique to boost the ACTIF's

promotion of the regional supply chain. The meeting was attended by both public and private sector players in the country.

The country has a lint production of 30,000 MT annually and the marketing/Sale period starts from July to November every year. Most of the gins used are Saw Gin that produces cotton lint with a staple Length of 1"1/8 and micronaire of 3,5 to 4,5. There is one intergraded textile firm and about two apparel factories

The ACTIF team held a meeting with the Mozambique Cotton Institute on the sidelines of the meeting; during the meeting the director of the institute welcomed the ACTIF's Pan-African initiative. He stated that he would like ACTIF to assist the Institute organize a CtC investor conference through its contacts. The Ministry of Industry also requested ACTIF to provide input to the Textile sector strategy preparation.

This was one of those rare Stakeholder meetings that the few textile and apparel companies in the country had an opportunity to meet with their well organized counterparts in the cotton sector thus improving collaborations between them to bolster their position in lobbying the government for better business environment.

The meeting achieved one of the goals set for the national level meeting which is; to build cooperation, interaction, and linkages within the region. This meeting was also attended by a representative of the USIAD COMPETE program thus building collaboration development partners and

Nigeria on 24th Feb 2010



The Governor of Kaduna Province officially opened the meeting

The Nigerian meeting was scheduled at the request of the Nigerian Textile Manufacturers Association last quarter during the visit by the ACTIF program manager that resulted in ACTIF formally reaching out to the Nigerian textile industry thus reinforcing the inter-regional supply chain message in West Africa.

Cotton production and marketing in Nigeria has had a long history of establishment dating back to the pre colonial era. Cotton export was once a one of the nation's major foreign exchange earners. However, the advent of the crude oil which led to a general decline of the agricultural sector, also affected the cotton production leading to a drop in output from 220,000 mt in 1975/76 to 28,000 mt in 1985/86. However In 1986, the price liberation introduced through structural adjustment programmer restored

Nigerians prime position on cotton production leading to an increase in growth from 28,000mt in 1976 to 70,000 mt in 1996. Since then, the national average output has been maintained between 150,000 mt and 300,000 mt. However, the cotton ginning capacity of Nigeria is 650,000 mt, much higher than the current production.

Some of the challenges highlighted during the meeting are; Increased cost of production due to the high cost of inputs and labor; shortage of working capital considering the capital intensive nature of cotton ginning and merchandizing activities; non availability of and in some cases high cost of credit facilities; irregular and expensive power supply; high costs of alternative power; fall in local demand for cotton lint due to continued closure of textile mills or scaling down of operations; over dependence on export even when international prices are low and un economical; un economical transportation costs; high commodity levies charged by all the states through which cotton moves; high statutory inspection charges; lack of sufficient incentives to cotton farmers, ginner and exporters; lack of legislation to regulate cotton marketing, distribution and marketing and Quality management challenges

However in the middle of these Challenges there are also opportunities which were highlighted as; close to 200,000 hectares of arable land is currently under cotton cultivation with a potential of employing up to 2 million people within the related activities of planting, weeding, harvesting and transportation. With some encouragement the area under cotton plantation can be increased and in turn increase employment opportunities; Increasing population of Nigeria also increases the demand of edible oil thereby impacting on the cotton production; the cotton sector has tremendous potential to generate export revenue as the world's fibre consumption increases;

The situation in the Nigeria textile industry is summarized in the table below

	In the Mid 80's	Current Situation
No of Mills	175 Units	30 units
No of direct employees	250,000	24,000
Utilization Capacity	75% - 85%	28%
Export share in the West African Market	30%	5%

Some of the critical challenges in this sector are those that are common in most ACTIF members countries, these are; Influx of counterfeit & smuggled textiles mainly from China leading to closure of a number of textile mills; the scarcity and high cost of black oil that is needed for the processing of fabrics; the escalating cost of gas that is crucial for the running of the boilers in most of the textile companies; Lack of affordable credit that is stalling investment activities; A costly and poorly distributed power supply with a devastating effect on the existing machinery; very expensive alternative sources of power; limited market access for the Nigerian fabrics; inconsistent government policies Other cost factors including water, steam and labour which have Nigeria be termed as one of the most expensive places to do business.

The production level of raw cotton, mainly short staple fibre, has been dwindling with time owing to the limited consumption levels. Alternative fibres, such as polyester chips were initially being imported and converted to fibre in Nigeria. Currently, however, all the companies that convert chips to fibre have since closed. This means that both fibre and yarn have to be imported as well as polyester fibre, acrylic, viscose fibres, filament yarn and other alternative fibres all have to be imported.

To take care of these challenges ACTIF learnt that a textile revival fund of approximately 100 Billion Naira that had been muted in 2006 is currently being implemented. This could have a very positive effect of reviving the old players as well as giving way to new ones; the industry could easily bounce back in the event the importation of the fabrics is reduced by even 20% owing to the huge local market.

The clothing sector is not well organized in Nigeria, there is currently no Association representing the interest of the sector Nigeria. A few companies, associated with Nigeria Textile Manufacturing Association NTMA, have some level of integration as they are involved knitting, processing and garmenting. This includes Cotsyn (Sunflag group), Femro group 3 Nig. Ltd., West African Thread Co. Ltd, Adhama Textile & Garment Ind. Ltd., Rosies Textile Mills Ltd. There are also others that are involved in CMT operations i.e. procuring fabrics, cutting and sewing e.g Sam and Sara, Ruff n Tumble, Viratex. Another group of companies are involved in fashion designing and tailoring of outfits which cater for the populace who sew for individuals on sew on made to measure basis.

Milestone

The main milestone of the meeting was the enthusiasm exhibited by the Industry; the Nigerian Textile Manufacturers Association & Nigerian Textile Garment & Tailoring Employers Association, and the National Cotton Association of Nigeria decided to join ACTIF membership after the meeting. Key program priority areas they would like to do jointly with ACTIF are; AGOA sensitization workshop and institutional capacity building workshop. The meeting was covered in the local media thus enhancing ACTIF visibility to promote the regional integration and **brand Africa theme- “Origin Africa -from Farm to Fashion”**

Egypt on 16th March 2010

Right; Marie Louis Bishara, VP Design Bishara Group – Presentation on ready make Garments industry meeting



The Egyptian textile industry accounts for 3% of the GDP, 27% of industrial output and about 14% of non petroleum exports. Careful supervision by the government has enabled the sector to rank second in production after agro industry and first in terms of jobs in the country (30% of the labor force). The strengths of the industry lie in three main areas: Raw materials that are locally available including natural fibres (extra long staple cotton) and manmade fibres (acrylic); Low prices

of utilities such as energy and water costs; Human resources with low labor costs and highly trained personnel. Another advantage of the Egyptian sector is its larger population of about 83 Million people. Egypt is also strategically located with an average of 4 hour flight time to most European capitals; its close proximity to North America as compared to the Asian countries; availability of direct vessels to USA east coast; proximity to gulf Asia and Africa. The conducive environment in Egypt has led to massive investment in the industry and currently some major International brands are manufactured there including: GAP, LEVIS, MARKS and SPENCER, Liz Claiborne, TOMMY HILFIGER, POLO RALPH LAUREN, GUESS, C&A, NEXT and HUGO BOSS.'

Home Textile Export Council (H.T.E.C) is an organization established under Ministry of Trade and Industry in Egypt. It works in a regulatory frame work that combines representatives of Exporters and producers responsible. It is responsible for preparing strategies and plans that aim to increase Exports and raise its efficiency to strengthen the competitive position of the Egyptian exports in foreign markets. In the final report of 2008 2009, the total export value was estimated at over 5.2 billion USD with 172 companies and a labor force of 127,997. The bulk of the exports comprises of knotted fabrics and textile floor coverings accounting for 53%. The other sectors include cotton towels 25%, bed sheets and tabels 15%, man-made carpets at 3% and the rest of the textiles sector accounting for 4% of the exports. The main export destinations include USA 44%, Italy 24%, UK 16%, Germany 8% and Netherlands 8%.

Through H.T.E.C, the members are able to take part in various local and international exhibitions including: China Home Textiles; Heimtextil, Germany; Global Home Textiles, USA; EVTEKS, Turkey; and Furnex, Egypt.

To support the growth of the Industry the Industrial Modernization Center (IMC) was established as an independent body that coordinates the modernization of the Egyptian industry under the Industrial Modernization Programme (IMP). Its mission is to support all industrial enterprises, individually or sectorially, according to their development needs. It currently serves 14,631 clients while providing over 80,000 services. IMC implements some capacity building programs including: Export support; Information Technology; Financial Services and factoring; Employment services; corporate social responsibility; environmental compliance and energy effectiveness; It also offers some special programmes in Supplies, Research and development, Quality assurance, In company experts and new factories support. IMC has been very instrumental in supporting the textile sector in Egypt. Specific projects that it runs for the textile sector include: Textile development strategy; Export readiness assessment; Establishment of the textile technology center; Waste water treatment study for textile cluster; Gap analysis for spinning & weaving; Dye house upgrading clusters; Environmental compliance & Oeko-tex certification cluster. IMG has set some new targets for the textile industry including increasing Textile and Ready Made Garments Exports from 15.4 Billion EGP in 2010 to 23.4 Billion EGP by 2013; adding 286 new exporters in the industry; attracting 21.2 Billion EGP investments; offer training for 90,000 factory workers and adding 240,000 new jobs in the sector.

At the end of the meeting the stakeholders expressed s interest in collaborating with ACTIF in the following areas;

Lint Trade; Egypt produces long staple and extract long staple lint that is majorly for export market and a small portion consumed by the local textile mills. The local spinning industry is currently importing cotton from Syria, Sudan and Greece to meet the local demand for medium staple length lint. Egyptian being a COMESA country, the local spinners can import lint from COMESA duty free, however according to the industry , there has been several obstacles some of them are; Sanitary and phytosanitary requirements by the Egyptian Government Ministry of Agriculture, lack of regional lint market information , logistics among others. The Industry welcomed the ACTIF initiative and would like to work with ACTIF to look at the possibilities of breaking some of these barriers to open up the Egyptian cotton market for the regional lint. This can be done through the Production Ginning and Lint trade committee. There were suggestions from ALCOTEXA to organize the mapping of the regional cotton growing areas as required by the Egyptian Government Ministry Agricultural as this can allow the Egyptian spinning industry to import lint from other African countries.

Promotion of trade in regional fiber, textiles and apparel Egypt is one of the few African Countries that has developed the full Farm to Fashion value chain. There are opportunities to work with other Africa countries to developed synergies in the value chain. For example the

demand for cotton yarn for the Egyptian home textile industry is in the increase, to produce high quality home textiles and apparel that can be traded within and outside the region.

The industry is interested in developing a B2B event with ACTIF aimed at matching demand and supply across the region. The initial idea is to start with a by-lateral B2B then upscale it to a regional B2B. This will stimulate demand and provide the market data that manufacturers and buyers need to make decisions

Co-operation in developing Original African Brands; ACTIF team was informed that the Egyptian Chamber for ready Garments is currently working at developing original Egyptian Brands using the Egyptian cotton label. This initiative done in collaboration with the Egyptian designers and the local value chain stakeholders, the Egyptian Fashion designers has been allocated space by the Paris Fashion week designers to promote the Egyptian original designs. Since ACTIF in collaboration with USAID-COMPETE program has launched the Origin Africa Brand to promote the regional Farm to Fashion supply chain through the promotion upcoming designers, the chambers suggested that this can be an area for collaboration. The space allocated to Egyptian Cotton Brand at the Paris Fashion show week to promote the upcoming African designers. The Egyptian Fashion designers through Ms Marie Louis Bishara who is the vice Chairman of the Chambers for ready garments would like to participate in the organization activities to enhance information exchange and collaboration with other designers from the rest of Africa through ACTIF

Education for Employment (EFE) Foundation Egypt; The Education for Employment (EFE) Foundation Egypt. EFE Egypt which is a local non-profit organization established through the cooperation with the EFE in the US expressed interest in working with ACTIF to share the foundation's mission in the ACTIF member countries. It has other affiliate foundations in Europe / Spain, Jordan, Palestine, Morocco and Yemen, the foundation has extensive outreach and exposure in youth employment.

Some of the Training programs that have been implemented by EFE Egypt include vocational, technical, and professional fields as accounting, air conditioner repair, land surveying, construction management, sales, and teaching, and critical soft skills such as leadership, interpersonal communications, and successful business behavior.

The ACTIF team discussed the possibility of forging a future partnership in order to develop special training programs within the Cotton, Textile & Apparel sectors. Capacity building is among the key objectives of ACTIF with an aim of enhancing the skills level in the Industry across the region.

National Level Meeting –Swaziland 29th March 2010



From left, Barry Fisher (COMPETE), Rajeev Arora (ACTIF), Earl M. Irving (USA Ambassador and Fred Kong'ong'o (ACTIF) during the Swaziland Meeting

This meeting was the first ever Cotton to clothing value chain meeting in Swaziland thus it attracted the attention of all key stakeholders that included the Government, Technoserve , private sector value chain stakeholders and the USA Ambassador to Swaziland.

During the meeting ACTIF team noted that the Swaziland textile and apparel sector has survived the effects of the Global economic crunch better than most of the Sub-Saharan Africa due to the supportive policies of the government.

There are no private sector National Association but as a result of the meeting the textile and apparel stakeholders are looking at ways to revive the collapsed trade Association.

The main outcome of the was the agreement of by the private sector National Value chain stakeholders to revive the National trade body to take care of the industry trade and policy advocacy interest. The ACTIF team also got the vital Swaziland market information that will be useful in promoting intra-regional and international trade. For example of the Apparel manufacturers in Swaziland have private label that is sold in the regional and local market, this is a good initiative that can be emulated by other Sub-Saharan African Countries

- c) **Maintain representation at regional and international fora;** during this quarter ACTIF secretariat participated in the COMESA Business Council Regional private Sector General meeting in Nairobi, January 2010. The delegates were drawn from the COMESA Secretariat and its institutions, regional sectoral industrial associations, national private sector associations, women's business networks, civil society and SME's and development partners, including the International Trade Centre (ITC) and USAID-COMPETE. This meeting is an effort by the COMESA secretariat to revamped the operations of the Business council with the support of COMESA/ITC PACT 11 program funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

The meeting provided an open platform for genuine dialogue among private sector actors, through sharing of various experiences and lessons learnt, as well as emerging issues vis-à-vis, regional trade related policy. It is expected that opportunities, challenges and recommendations, highlighted during the meeting, will inform the CBC Draft Strategic Plan and Work Plans.

The meeting was held at the backdrop of Africa's massive resource potential that is yet to be explored and exploited for the benefit of its members. Focus was laid on modalities of intensifying exchanges between regional apex bodies and their constituents as well as enhancing public private dialogue. Members present shared lessons, experiences, opportunities, challenges and recommendations as part of their input into the draft CBC strategic plan and work plan. During this meeting ACTIF successfully positioned itself to play a major role in the revival of the COMESA Business council to fully represent its members through the COMESA organ

ACTIF team also participated in the Bremen Cotton conference in Germany and Prime Source conference in Hong Kong the details are in the attached reports

- d) **Merging and rationalizing the two websites (the cottonafrica.com and actifafrica.com websites);** cottonafrica.com is a trade linkage website while actifafrica.com is an intuitional. The processing of merging the two website that began last quarter has progressed very well and will be completed by April 20th, 2010. When completed the website will be more interactive ; it's hope that it will provide Market Information and update regional and international industry news. ACTIF aim is to use the website as a source of revenue through branded services.

5.0 Funding Summary (\$'s rounded)

Approved Grant	750,000
Amount spent	465,000
Balance unspent	285,000

6.0 Deliverables (those in document format)

The following (attached to this report) are the deliverables available in 'document' format:

- a) Media report
- b) ACTIF Company profile
- c) ACTIF brand manual
- d) Prime Source and Bremen conference report
- e) ACTIF News Letter

~ End of Report ~